CHAPTER II

THE TREATY or CAMPO FORMIO l

Bonaparte and the Mediterranean — France and the Orient — Bonaparte's Grand Diplomacy — Importance of Malta — Course of Negotiations with Austria — Novel Tactics of the French Plenipotentiary — The Treaty of Campo Formio — Results of Fructidor — Bonaparte's Interests Conflict with those of the Directory — Europe and the Peace.

BONAPARTE was a child of the Mediterranean. The light of its sparkling waters was ever in his eyes, and the fascination of its ancient civilizations was never absent from his dreams of glory. His proclamations ring with classic allusions, his festivals were arranged with classic pomp. In infancy he had known of Genoa, the tyrant of his island, as strong in the splendid commercial enterprises which stretched eastward through the Levant, and beyond into the farther Orient; in childhood he had fed his imagination on the histories of Alexander the Great, and his conquest of Oriental empires; in youth he had thought to find an open door for his ambition, when all others seemed closed, by taking service with England to share the renown of those who were building up her Eastern empire. Disappointed in this, he appears to have turned with the same lack of success to Russia, already England's rival on the continent of Asia. It is perfectly comprehensible that throughout his early manhood his mind should have occasionally reverted to the same ideals. The conqueror of Italy and Austria might hope to realize

1 Authorities as before.